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[From Sicily—A Pilgrimage, by H. T. TUCKERMAN—in the press of G. P. Putnam, New York.]

VINCENZO BELLINI.

Point not these mysteries to an art,
Lodged above the starry pole;
Pure modulations flowing from the heart
Of divine Love, where wisdom, beauty, truth,
With order dwell in endless youth?

WORDSWORTH.

In the narrow street of St. Christoforo, in Catania, and near the little church of the same order, now superseded by a larger edifice, was born the most beautiful composer of our times. To the imaginative mind of Isabel his name and memory were sacredly endeared. It has been said that no after maturity of judgment can dissolve the spell by which the first poet we ever understood and enjoyed is hallowed in our estimation. On the same principle, the composer whose works are the means of awakening in our hearts a new sense of the wonder and power of his art, whose compositions sway our spirits as no others have done, and address our associations with an eloquence, compared with which all similar language is unimpressive, holds a place in our estimation and affections second to that of no intellectual benefactor. He has opened to us a new world. He has brought a hitherto untried influence to stir the ocean of feeling. He has created yet another joy in the dim circle of our experience, and woven a fresh and perennial flower into the withered garland of life. With the thought of Bellini, embalmed in such a sentiment of gratitude, Isabel, accompanied by the

count, who had arranged the visit for her gratification, went forth to view the memorials of the departed that were in the possession of his family.

"The young Vincenzo," said Vittorio, "from his earliest infancy, gave evidence of the genius of his nature. His susceptibility to musical sounds was remarkable. He could be moved, at any time, to tears or laughter, to sadness or ecstasy, by the voice of harmony. While a mere child, after hearing on public occasions a new air, he would, on returning home, from memory transcribe it. At eight years old his little hands ran over the keys of the organ, at the Benedictine convent, with surprising facility. His first compositions were occasional pieces of sacred music.

It was early discovered that he was a proper object of patronage, and, soon after arriving at manhood, he was sent, at the expense of government, to study at Naples and Rome. The result of an acquaintance with what had been effected in his art was to make more clearly perceptible to his mind the necessity of a new school. The history of genius in every department is almost always a record of conflicts—of struggles against what is dominant. Thus the early efforts of Bellini were frequently unappreciated and misunderstood. Still he persevered in consulting the oracle of his own gifts, and in developing the peculiar and now universally admired style which marks his compositions. The first of his successful operas was the *Pirata*, then the *Straniera*, then the *Sonnambula*, and then *Norma*.* In each successive work we can trace a decided progression. The first is pretty, often beautiful; the last is throughout beautiful, and frequently sublime. It is a delightful thought, that in a country where literary talent is repelled by the restrictions on the press, musical genius is untrammelled, and human sentiment may, through this medium, find free and glorious development."

"I have always regarded music," said Isabel, "as the perfection of language."

"Undoubtedly it should be so considered, and although the censors jealously guard the actual

* *L'Adelson e Salvini*, represented before the Institution at Naples, was the first open experiment of Bellini's genius, followed, in 1826, by *Bianca e Fernando*, at the St. Carlo Theatre. *Il Pirata* and *La Straniera*, successively produced at the Scala in Milan, completely established his reputation. The *Montecchi e Capuleti* was brought out soon after at Venice. The *Sonnambula* and *Norma* at Milan, and the *Puritani* in Paris.

verbal expressions attached to operas, to a true imagination and just sensibility, the mere notes of masterpieces are perfectly distinguishable, as expressive of the thousand sentiments which sway the heart. Bellini, it is believed, was one of that secret society which has for some time existed, under the title of "Young Italy," whose aim is the restoration of these regions to independence; and we can read, or rather feel, the depth and fervor of his liberal sentiments, breathing in the glowing strains of his last opera—the *Puritani*."

Thus conversing, they arrived at the residence of his family, where, with emotions of melancholy interest, they viewed the tokens of his brief but brilliant career. There were little remembrancers whose workmanship testified that they were wrought by fair hands; the order of the legion of honor; a rich carpet, worked by the ladies of Milan, with the names of his operas tastefully interwoven, and many fantasies and fragments written by his own hand. There was something indescribably touching in the sight of these trophies. Isabel felt, as she gazed upon them, how empty and unavailing are the tributes men pay to living genius compared with that heritage of fame which is its after-recompense. What were these glittering orders to the breast they once adorned—now mouldering in the grave? And these indications of woman's regard, which, perhaps, more than any other, pleased the heart of the young Catanese? How like the deckings of vanity did they seem now, when he for whom they were playfully wrought was enshrined among the sons of fame! How sad, too, to behold the slight characters and unconnected notes—the recorded inspiration of him who alone could rightly combine and truly set forth their meaning! How affecting to look upon these characters—the pencilling of genius, and remember that the hand which inscribed them was cold in the tomb! But Isabel dwelt longest and most intently upon a miniature of Bellini, taken at the age of twenty-three, after the representation of the *Pirata*. It portrayed the youthful composer with a pale intellectual countenance, an expansive and noble brow, and hair of the lightest auburn. There was a striking union of gentleness and intelligence, of lofty capacity and kindly feeling, in the portrait.

"How unlike the generality of his countrymen!" exclaimed Isabel, who had looked for the dark eye and hair of the nation.

"Nature, in every respect," replied Vittorio, "marked him for a peculiar being. Yet the softness and quiet repose of the countenance is like his harmony. The mildness of the eye and the delicacy of the complexion speak of refinement. The whole physiognomy is indicative of taste and sentiment, a susceptibility and grace almost womanly, and, at the same time, a thoughtfulness and calm beauty, which speak of intellectual labor and suffering. The face of Bellini here depicted, is like his music, moving, expressive, and graceful. I have seen portraits taken at a later age with less of youth, and perhaps, for that reason, less of interest in their expression. During his lifetime all he received for his works, not absolutely requisite for his support, was immediately sent to his family. And now his aged father may be said, in a double sense, to live on the fame of his son, since, in consideration of that son's arduous labors in the cause of music, which in southern Europe may be considered perhaps the only truly national object of common interest, the old man receives a pension from government, adequate to his maintenance."

"I think," said Isabel, as the party were seated in the opera-house the same evening, "that the great characteristic of Bellini is what may be called his metaphysical accuracy. There is an intimate correspondence between the idea of the drama and the notes of the music. What a perfect tone of disappointed affection lurks in the strain: 'Ah! perche non posso odiarti?'—the favorite air in the *Sonnambula*; and who that should unpreparedly hear the last duet in *Norma*, would not instantly feel that it is the mingled expression of despair and fondness? How warlike and rousing are the Druidical choruses, and what peace breathes in the Hymn to the Moon! It is this delicate adaptation of the music to the sentiment, this typifying of emotion in melody, that seems to me to render Bellini's strains so heart-stirring."

"In other words," said Vittorio, "he affects us powerfully, for the same reason that Shakspeare, or any other universally acknowledged genius, excites our sympathy. His music is true. He has been called the Petrarch of harmony, that poet being deemed by the Italians the most perfect portrayer of love."

"And would that his fate had been more like that bard's!" exclaimed Isabel. "How melancholy that he should have died so young, in the very moment, as it were, of success and honor! I shall never forget the sorrow I felt when his death was announced to me. I was in a ball-room. The scene was gay and festive. The band had performed in succession the most admired quadrilles from his operas. I was standing in a circle which surrounded a party of waltzers, and expressed the delight I had received from the airs we had just heard. My companion responded, and sighing, calmly said, 'What a pity he will compose no more!' When I thus learned the fact of his death, and afterwards the particulars, a gloom came over my spirits, which, during the evening, had been uncommonly buoyant. I retired to the most solitary part of the room, and indulged the reflections thus suddenly awakened. 'How few,' thought I, 'of this gay throng, as they dance to the enlivening measures of Bellini, will breathe a sigh for his untimely end, or give a grateful thought to his memory.' Some of the company passed me on their way to the music-

room. I joined them. A distinguished amateur, with a fine bass voice, had taken his seat at the instrument. For a moment he turned over the book listlessly, and then, as if inspired by a pleasing recollection, burst forth in that mournfully beautiful cavatina: '*Vi ravviso, lunghi ameni.*' He sang it with much feeling. There was silent and profound attention. The tears rose to my eyes. To my excited imagination we seemed to be listening to the dirge of Bellini; and, as the last lengthened note died on the lips of the vocalist—thus, thought I, he expired. Little did I then think I should ever see the native city of the composer, or sit in the opera-house which he doubtless frequented."

"It but this moment occurred to me," replied Vittorio, "that, in this very place Bellini first learned to appreciate the science he afterwards so signally advanced; to realize the expressiveness of the agency he afterwards so effectually wielded; to feel the power of the art to whose advancement he afterwards so nobly contributed. Perhaps here first dawned on his young ambition the thought of being a composer. Perhaps, as the breathings of love, grief, fear, and triumph here stirred his youthful breast, the bright hope of embodying them in thrilling music, and thus living in his 'land's language,' rose, like the star of destiny, before his awakened fancy."

There is a narrow but sequestered road leading from Catania to Cifali, just without the Porta D' Aci. A low plaster wall separates it on both sides from extensive gardens, the site of an ancient burial-place, where memorials of the dead have been frequently disinterred. Over the top of these boundaries the orange and almond trees, in the season of spring, refresh the pedestrian with their blossoms and perfume. In the early mornings of summer, or at the close of the day, this road is often sought by the meditative, being less frequented than most of the other highways leading from the city. There one can stroll along and interest himself with the thought of the now extinct people near whose ruined sepulchres he is treading, or gaze upon the broad face and swelling cone of Etna which rises before him. At an agreeable distance from the commencement of this path is an old monastery of Franciscans. The floor of the venerable church is covered with the deeply-carved tablets, beneath which are the remains of the Catanese nobility, their arms elaborately sculptured upon the cold slabs. Strangers sometimes visit a chapel adjacent to see a well-executed bust, which displays the features of the nobleman who lies beneath, and is thought to be the *capo d'opera* of a Roman sculptor. The adjoining chapel is assigned as the last resting-place of Vincenzo Bellini, whose monument will soon exhibit its fresh-chiselled aspect amid the time-worn emblems around. Thither, one morning, Isabel and the count wandered, and, after leaving the church, sat upon a stone bench which overlooked the scene, and to her inquiries as to the funeral honors paid, in his native island, to the memory of the composer, he replied:

"You should have witnessed in order to realize the universal grief of the Catanese. Business was suspended. Every voice faltered as it repeated the tidings; every eye was moistened as it marked the badges of mourning. In the capital the same spirit prevailed. There, but a few months previous, the king entered the city,

and no voice hailed him, because the professions made at the outset of his reign were unfulfilled. The gifted composer came, and acclamations welcomed him. Every testimony of private regard and public honor was displayed. His sojourn was a festival—so the news of his death created universal grief. Here, in the spirit of antiquity, an oration was pronounced in the theatre, his favorite airs performed, and actors, in the old Sicilian costume, represented the effect of his death by an appropriate piece, with mournful music. In the streets were processions, in the churches masses, and in the heart of every citizen profound regret."

"And this," said Isabel, glancing over the scene, "is a fit place for his repose. He will sleep at the foot of Etna, amid the nobles of his native city. The ladies of this villa, as they wander through the garden in the still summer evening, will sing his most soothing strains. The peasant, as he rides by on his mule, at the cool hour of dawn, will play upon his reeds the gladder notes, the choir in the church will chant the anthems, and the blind violinist, as he rests by the road-side, cheer himself with the pleasant music of the departed composer."

They rose to depart. As Isabel looked back, and began to lose sight of the ancient convent, she observed a lofty cypress at the corner of the road. As its dense foliage waved solemnly, and its spire-like cone pointed heavenward, it appeared to her saddened fancy like a mournful sentinel, standing to guard from sacrilege, and point out for homage, the last resting-place of Bellini.

[From Cocks's Musical Miscellany.]

Provision for the Musician.

(Concluded.)

We are not, in the heterogeneous suggestions we have here thrown together, endeavoring to invoke public charity on behalf of the musician, though the benevolence of an enlightened people might find a less honorable field for the exertion of its energies. Our observations are addressed first and foremost to musicians themselves. They have in themselves, to speak mechanically, a power, if they knew how to use it. The coals which lie black and inert upon your wharfs are by and bye converted into an active agency, which is reeling cotton at the rate of millions of yards per minute, or snorting in gusty impatience as it heaves the vessel on its way, or drinks up and disgorges the flood of the mine. The energies of the professional body are now inoperative as the latent power of the coal on the wharf. But the power, though latent, is there, and it only remains for some clever engineer to show them how "to get up the steam."

Is there not sufficient *esprit-de-corps* amongst them to induce them to aim at letting their individual respectability go hand in hand with the respectability of their order? Comparatively few have been their combined efforts to promote the dignity of the profession. There is the Royal Society for the support of decayed Musicians—an association formed more than a century ago, and, as its name implies, under the highest auspices. Handel, whose heart, after all, seems to have been as gentle as his manner was rough, bequeathed a thousand pounds to this society. Signora Storace also left it a like munificent sum. It is patronized by the elite of the profession, and among its pensioners it reckons, at present, some bearing names of honor. No one, we believe, questions the purity of its officers and directors; but many appear to think that it is conducted much in the spirit of a close corporation. At any rate, it is able to disburse upwards of two thousand pounds yearly in a select way, for the

best of purposes, namely, to support dejected age, and to feed and educate the unprotected orphan. A goodly sum in itself, certainly; but one can scarcely avoid asking, — "What is that among so many?"

Professors have but to condescend to take a lesson from the operative bodies, to the effect that "union is strength." A rope of sand would not raise even an empty bucket from a well. In combination is unlimited power. A trifling quarterage levied upon the whole body would form the nucleus of a fund, from which suffering members might draw relief, not as of charity, but of right. The trade would submit to a certain honorary tribute, in consideration of the advantages derived by them from the working body: a like tribute might be raised, in the shape of black mail, from the concert rooms; while the power of sweet sound might be evoked to do, in annual festivals, for the professors of the art, what it has so often done for strangers, and swell the united fund to an undefinable extent. Here, indeed, is a rich and unlimited source of wealth. What would be the proceeds of a benefit concert in all the music halls and concert rooms in England? — and we might even have the audacity to ask for a yearly collection in every church, under the threat of a *strike* in the organ lofts in case of recusancy. Sixteen thousand pounds were thrown into the coffers of the Royal Society of Musicians just referred to, as part of the profits of the great Commemoration of Handel, in 1784; and that society also received upwards of two thousand pounds, a fourth part of the proceeds of the Royal Festival, in Westminster Abbey in 1834. The Foundling Hospital netted more than ten thousand pounds, by ten performances of the "Messiah" — in gratitude for which, by the way, the governors of that institution manifested an inclination to bring the composer into court upon the question of his copyright. With such means at their disposal, with a power in their own keeping, which is rivalled by nothing but the geni of an oriental tale, how is it that the profession is so self-denying as to remain worse provided for than almost any body of men that can be named?

It is strange, that, while public sympathy has descended to embrace, not only the children of the honest poor, but even to rescue the juvenile felon and educate him by force — while numerous institutions have been formed for the education of children of all ranks — while the Blue Coat School continues to open its princely halls expressly for the reception of such as do not stand in need of its aid — while Mr. Whiston has been bruising his shins, stumbling amongst the ruins of the magnificent educational establishments of the country in the olden time — "and the spectacle-maker" has been offering the use of his most powerful glasses to assist collegiate bodies to read their own constitutions — it is strange — that, amidst all this educational stir and turmoil, musicians have never once thought of the formation of an institution for affording their children an education suitable to the rank which they are well entitled to claim.

Among the more recent efforts of this nature, we have lately seen a body of men who are by no means famous for provident habits, — the Commercial Travellers — establishing a school for the orphan and necessitous children of members of their society. One could hardly have anticipated so enlightened a movement in such a quarter: while it should be recollected that the necessities of the orphan, it was, that gave birth to the Royal Society of Musicians. Two or three of his contemporaries, while standing at the door of the Orange Coffee-house, in the Haymarket, saw the children of Kytch, the oboe-player, driving milch-asses. They contributed a sum for the rescue of the innocent victims of a father's improvidence; and their contributions formed the basis of this really noble institution. But, since we have begun to institute a comparison, we must remark, that the Travellers annually raise a splendid revenue for making a suitable provision for a large number of children — their last report exhibiting an expenditure of more than six thousand pounds within the year, —

while the Musicians' Society, according to the last of their reports, which we have at hand — namely, that of 1847 — seem to have disbursed only NINETY-SEVEN POUNDS for the exact purpose of Education! It must, however, be observed that the aggregate of their expenditure includes also sums paid on behalf of the orphans, of which no particular account is given.

It is not, however, on behalf of the orphans of the recklessly improvident alone that the appeal should be made. There are misfortunes such as no foresight can anticipate — no prudence avert. We cannot refuse ourselves the satisfaction of quoting a passage which happens to be at this moment under our eye, from a sermon preached a hundred and twenty years ago, at the Festival of the Three Choirs, at Hereford; because we should be extremely sorry not to think that there are members of the musical profession to whom it is, in its degree and manner, applicable. "I shall beg leave only," says the preacher, speaking of the children of his deceased brethren, "to observe, what should further bespeak our commiseration of those Friendless Orphans: that the Poverty of their Parents may have been owing to what must be ever esteemed their greatest honor. They are seldom followers of Fortune. Content in their lower Sphere, they are not studious of the Art of Rising nor acquainted with those Compliances, which the wiser children of this world call Prudence."

[From the Christian Inquirer, (N. Y.) Aug. 11.]

TRUE POETRY.

The difference between true poetry and factitious poetry is perhaps this: the last is written, the first writes itself. In the one case the poet or poetess appears manifest, in the other the poetry; in the one case it was the evident intention to write some fine lines, in the other case there was something in the heart that must be said. Hence the sharp-sighted Greeks, who knew all these things, symbolized the source of poetry as a fountain. But most of our poetry is taken from wells, or forced up by pumps. It is therefore refreshing to meet with a genuine expression of the soul, like that which I copy for you below. A friend showed these lines to me, and asked who was the writer. I had not seen them, but perhaps some of your readers can say. J. F. C.

I.

O heart! long dormant in thy dreary pain,
Canst thou not rouse thee from the deathlike sleep,
Put forth the blossoms of young joy again,
And cease o'er buried hopes to pine and weep?

II.

Around thee everywhere on life's wide page,
The beauty and the glory liveth still;
The sacred light upon the brow of age,
The strength of youthful hand and earnest will.

III.

Earth hath her field of labor, rich and broad;
Canst thou not in the glorious toil bear part?
Hast thou no gift to be improved for God,
No dew of love for other human heart?

IV.

O heart, poor heart, that madest thyself a tomb
Of one dead hope! fling wide thy charnel door,
And on the depths of that dark, rayless gloom,
The flood of heaven's glad light shall freely pour.

V.

O wasted years! — and yet not wasted all;
Does not the ploughman rend, then sow the plain?
What though spring flowers beneath the ploughshare fall;
Shall not the harvest smile with golden grain?

Here is the motto of the New England Psalm Singer or American Chorister, by William Billings, a native of Boston, in New England. The book was published in 1770. —

"O, praise the Lord with one consent,
And in this grand design,
Let Britain and the Colonies
Unanimously join!"

By the quality no less than by the fulness and versatility of this collection have we again been led to speculate hopefully on the intense curiosity

which prevails in the New World with regard to all manner of works of art and imagination, and to the thoughts and lives of those who produce them. This thick and rather costly book is, after its kind, a manifestation as suggestive as the classes of talking ladies in Boston who assembled to be instructed by Margaret Fuller concerning the "idea of Jupiter," the "idea of Bacchus," and the like Arcadian and classical topics. — *London Athenæum*.

[From "Reminiscences of MICHAEL KELLY."]

Musical Critics at Rome, A. D. 1779.

The day after our arrival, we went to the Corso, where the sports of the carnival were going on. There was to be seen the whole population of Rome, high and low, rich and poor, *en masque*; the nobility and ladies in their most splendid equipages, all masqued, throwing sugar-plums to the motley group below, which was composed of mountebanks, pulcinellas, cardinals, harlequins, &c., with music, dancing, singing. — In short, I was in a delirium of pleasure! Every evening, we visited the theatres: — there are two for serious operas, the *Aliberti* and the *Argentina*, where the best performers are always found; indeed, should the manager attempt to introduce anything inferior, woe be to him! and, as these theatres are only allowed to be open during the carnival, he is obliged to pay enormous salaries to procure the first singers; for the Romans will have the best or none. There are also two theatres for comic operas, *La Capranica* and *La Valle*.

The Romans assume that they are the most sapient critics in the world; they are, certainly, the most severe ones: — they have no medium, — all is delight or disgust. If asked whether a performance or a piece has been successful, the answer, if favorable, is, *è andato al settimo cielo*, — "it has ascended to the seventh heaven." If it has failed, they say, *è andato all' abisso del inferno*, "it has sunk to the abyss of hell." The severest critics are the Abbés, who sit in the first row of the pit, each armed with a lighted wax taper in one hand, and a book of the opera in the other; and should any poor devil of a singer miss a word, they call out *bravo, bestia*, — "bravo, you beast!"

It is customary for the composer of an opera to preside at the piano forte the first three nights of its performance, and a precious time he has of it in Rome. Should any passage in the music strike the audience as similar to one of another composer, they cry, *Bravo, il ladro*, — "bravo, you thief;" or "bravo, Paesello! bravo, Sacchini!" if they suppose the passage stolen from them, "the curse of God light on him who first put a pen into your hand to write music!" This I heard said, in the Teatro Aliberti, to the celebrated composer Gazzaniga, who was obliged to sit patiently at the piano forte to hear the flattering commendation.

Cimarosa, who was their idol as a composer, was once so unfortunate as to make use of a movement in a comic opera, at the *Teatro della Valle*, which reminded them of one of his own, in an opera composed by him for the preceding carnival. An Abbé started up, and said, "Bravo, Cimarosa! you are welcome from Naples; by your music of to-night, it is clear you have neither left your trunk behind you, nor your old music; you are an excellent cook in hashing up old dishes!"

Poggi, the most celebrated buffo singer of his day, always dreaded appearing before those stony-hearted critics; however, tempted by a large sum, he accepted an engagement at the *Teatro della Valle*. He arrived in Rome some weeks previous to his engagement, hoping to make friends, and form a party in his favor; he procured introductions to the most severe and scurrilous, and thinking to find the way to their hearts through their mouths, gave them splendid dinners daily. One of them, an Abbé, he selected from the rest, as his bosom friend and confidante; he fed, clothed, and supplied him with money; he confided to him his terrors at appearing before an audience so fastidious as the Romans. The Abbé assured him, that he had nothing to fear, as his opinion

was looked up to by the whole bench of critics; and when he approved, none dare dissent.

The awful night for poor Poggi at length arrived; his *fidus Achates* took his usual seat, in his little locked-up chair in the pit. It was agreed between them, that he was to convey to Poggi, by signs, the feeling of the audience towards him;—if they approved, the Abbé was to nod his head; if the contrary, to shake it.—When Poggi had sung his first song, the Abbé nodded, and cried, "Bravo! bravissimo!" but in the second act, Poggi became hoarse, and imperfect; the audience gave a gentle hiss, which disconcerted the affrighted singer, and made him worse; on this, his *friend* became outrageous, and standing up on his chair, after putting out his wax-light, and closing his book, he looked Poggi in the face, and exclaimed, "Signor Poggi, I am the mouth of truth, and thus declare, that you are decidedly the worst singer that ever appeared in Rome! I also declare, that you ought to be hooted off the stage for your impudence, in imposing on my simple and credulous good nature as you have done." This produced roars of laughter, and poor Poggi retired, never to appear again, without even exclaiming, *Et tu Brute*, which he might most appropriately have applied to his guardian crony.

A circumstance something like this took place at the *Teatro Argentina*. A tenor singer of the name of Gabrielli, brother of the great female singer of that name, was engaged there. Before he had got through five bars of his first song, the critics began to hiss and hoot, (and very deservedly so, for he was execrable), saying, "Get away, you cursed raven!" "Get off, you Goat!" On which he came forward and addressed the audience very mildly, "You fancy you are mortifying me, by hooting me; you are grossly deceived; on the contrary, I applaud your judgment, for I solemnly declare to you, that I never appeared on any stage without receiving the same treatment, and sometimes much worse!" This appeal, though it produced a momentary laugh, could not procure a second appearance for the poor fellow.

[A Sketch from the French by W. GRILLIERS.]

Strauss and his Sophie Waltz.

JOHN STRAUSS may indeed merit the epithet of the modern Orpheus, for his tender, moving, and soul-stirring music cannot fail to conquer the most inveterate enemy of Terpsichore. Ye sons and daughters of revelry, who have oft listened to his ever-gushing, inexhaustible fount of melody, cannot ye say with me that the magic sounds might indeed soothe hearts, still sighs, dry tears, tame wild beasts, and even move the stones themselves? Ye must have observed the full and syren-like beauty and poetry of his melody, in one phrase of which may be found more music—real music, than in many a heavy score. And it is not the melody alone which seizes with magical influence on the brain, and finds its way into every nook and corner of our being, but the rhythm is irresistible. His violin is the talisman by which he brings forth from the inward recess of the human soul the brightest seraphic joy, the deepest, direful woe, and then mingles them with Jove-like hand. The bow with which he draws these various colored tones from his instrument is the magic wand, which touching the desponding and grief-torn soul with a precious and healing balm of joy, lends her wings to rise phoenix-like high, high into the heaven of peace. There are numerous waltz compositions as rich in melody, but few are as rich in that melting rhythm which characterizes the music of Strauss. By turns skipping, humming, waltzing, gliding and dancing, so inviting, so irresistible that no one—withal a dancer—can withstand their witching and magical influence. He is the idol of women. In every house, on every piano in Vienna, lie Strauss' waltzes. He has written over two hundred, all are favorites, all are sung, and trilled, and played throughout Europe. Plebeian and aristocrat hum and pipe them, orchestra and barrel-organ play them. We hear them in the street, at the ball, in the garden, and at the theatre. The dancing

Viennese carry him in triumph on their shoulders, and shout "Strauss for ever," the rest of Europe re-echoes the sound and cries "Strauss for ever."

Strauss, the waltz-hero, loved the daughter of a count. Sophie was her name. Her eye as blue as Italy's heaven, and softer than the sweet light of the evening star. Grace and beauty shone forth in every motion, and sweet melody in every tone. He would have given worlds to have won but one glance of love from this beautiful being, but she was cold and stern. Madness indeed it was for a poor wandering musician, with nothing but his violin, to dare to love the high-born Sophie, who had as many noble ancestors as he had waltzes.

"Rash impertinence," said Sophie; and when he came to give her brother a lesson she scarcely deigned to give him a look. Shortly afterwards Sophie became the betrothed of the Count Robert, Lord Chamberlain, who also could boast as many proud ancestors as the fair Sophie, but beyond these and his titles he had nothing else.

One day Strauss chanced to be alone with Sophie; he sank upon his knees before her, and with the burning words of the maddening passion, declared his love, and besought her to give him but one word or look ere he was driven to despair. But no tears or protestations could move her, she was as cold and unfeeling as the inanimate marble. "I am the affianced bride of Count Robert," she said, haughtily, "and if it were otherwise, think you I would become the wife of a poor musician?" She turned scornfully away and left him alone in his grief and despair. The repentance which soon awoke in the heart of Sophie came too late. The bridegroom and her father hastened the nuptial day—in eight days she would become the wife of Count Robert. The ceremony was to be performed in the grand saloon of the city, and the Count called on Strauss to request him to lead the orchestra on the occasion, and to honor his bride with the composition of a new waltz.

Strauss, the most miserable man in God's universe, promised him both. "He wishes to wound me yet more deeply," said the unhappy man to himself, "but I pardon him, and my prayer to heaven is that she may be happy, and that she never repent her choice."

But his waltz! a thought strikes him, it shall be the interpreter of his passion and his grief to Sophie, it should challenge her pity, if not her love. Oh! what glorious power, to be able to speak, to reproach, to plead; and through his divine art. To work! to work!

When all the great city slept, Strauss took his violin, opened his window, gazed out into the cold night, and improvised and moaned forth his sad tale of woe to the sweet stars above, who looked kindly down on the desolate and heart-stricken.

The day of the wedding came at last. The fearful agony of love had given him a waltz every measure of which spoke a longing sorrow and despairing woe. The hall glistened and shone with bright jewels and brighter eyes, but Sophie was more gloriously beautiful than them all. The richest gems lent their beauty and their lustre; the pure myrtle wreath bloomed in her golden hair, and the rare and costly veil shaded her beautiful features from the full gaze of the admiring crowd. Strauss, a haggard, emaciated man, with brilliant and piercing black eyes, sharp and strongly marked features, dressed from head to foot in black, as though he had assumed this mourning livery for the bride now dead to him, stood sad and silent in the gallery above, directing the movements of the orchestra. Sophie danced now with one, now with another of the wedding guests, and as often as she paused after the giddy whirl of the dance, she turned her eyes towards the pale and grief-stricken Strauss, in his robes of sorrow and mourning, and each time met his piercing look of despairing love.

It was more than pity she felt, it was remorse, it was a kindled love. A terrible pain awoke in her heart, like the swelling of a stream, growing ever deeper and wider in its onward course, which threatened to overwhelm and destroy her. How gladly would she have wept, but she dared not.

It sounded twelve; Strauss gave the signal for the performance of his new waltz. The gay dancers stood up, Sophie on the arm of the happy bridegroom. All stand spell-bound with the magic witchery of those magic sounds. They forget to dance, they gaze in wonder up at the pale man in black, whose grief-torn soul breathes out its woe through his beloved instrument. His bow moved with his heart, his spirit moves in unison. The bridegroom leads off the dance, and Strauss, with fascinated, tearful eyes, and torn heart, follows the flying pair in their giddy whirl. They dance, and dance, and dance, and still do not cease. Strauss plays, and plays, and no stop to his wonderful waltz, which so fearfully affects both him and them. They still dance, and dance; he plays, and plays; as sudden as the lightning's flash the E of his violin snaps, and at the same moment the beautiful Sophie falls dead upon the floor. Violin and bow fall from his trembling hands, and with a cry of horror, he shrieks "Sophie!" and falls fainting on the ground.

Since Sophie's death, the waltz is called by her name. Strauss loved her to the last moment of his existence. He, too, is now dead, but his charming Sophie waltz still lives.—*London Musical World*.

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, AUGUST 21, 1852.

BELLINI. On our first page is a pleasant article, (perhaps we may say reminiscence of early enthusiasm,) about this graceful and pathetic composer, kindly furnished us in anticipation of his forthcoming volume by our friend Tuckerman. We cannot agree with him, however, that Bellini was the most beautiful composer of our times, or that *Norma*, if throughout beautiful, is ever sublime. Indeed we have no memory of Bellini which suggests that term. His sweetly sad and tender strains have exercised a rare fascination upon all musically or poetically susceptible natures at some time, generally the rose-colored time of life. They are always graceful, always pathetic; but the almost uniform experience with regard to this music is that it is not bracing, strong, invigorating; that one wearies of the play upon the same ceaseless monochord of tender passion; and that the Bellini melody becomes at last, wherever met in any of his operas, only so much more variation of the old strain easily recognizable. It is only when we do not know Beethoven, or Weber, or Mendelssohn, or Mozart, that Bellini so takes possession of us as to fill our whole musical horizon. Coming after Rossini's sparkling *bravura*, he was welcome as one who more touched the heart. But then mere sentiment at last grows weak and sickly, and the explorer in the magic world of music is apt to come round again to Rossini to enjoy the vastly greater wealth and variety of actual invention, and to find in him the *genius* and the spring of the whole modern Italian lyric school. And what shall he say, when he comes to explore among the Germans!

Still the life and music of Bellini are a beautiful, poetic whole; and it is often pleasant, and indeed wholesome, to go back to that youthful glow of sentiment, in which he has been such a near friend and interpreter to so many.

But we have already given our impression of Bellini, somewhat fully, as contrasted with that of several other great composers, in a former number.

The Musical Convention.

The gathering is scarcely at its climax, while we write; but it will be all over by the time this reaches our subscribers. The time consumed in frequent attendance (yet by no means constant) on the exercises, with the excitement and confusion of so much novelty and promise, hardly allows of a calm, clear-headed, comprehensive survey and estimate of the whole affair. Yet every step so far has been full of suggestion. We always find it so with these "Conventions," howsoever and by whomsoever conducted. They revive all the questions and speculations about the progress of music in this country; they perpetually renew the wonder, with which one contemplates this strange, prodigious Yankee activity in the manufacture, compilation, adaptation or perversion of loads upon loads of books of psalmody, glees, anthems, organ voluntaries and elementary treatises, to feed the not-over-squeamish, nor even delicate appetite for *something more to sing*, which they create throughout the country. They force upon one, again and again, the question whether all this musical ambition, which has developed itself in so many great schools or parties, that love to "sit in convention assembled," really points to a day when we shall be truly a musical people.

These great and general questions mingle themselves so much with the special observations and criticisms that occur in watching the movement day by day of such a gathering, as to make us wish to put the whole thing off at a good distance from us, before we can trust ourselves to see it in its true relations and seize its whole significance. Nevertheless we must remember that we are an editor, and begin, as we are *in mediis rebus*; simply recording for the present some notes of what we have witnessed, with such chance comments as they may suggest.

1. NUMBERS AND ORGANIZATION.

The number in attendance it has been hard to estimate, because it has varied very much from time to time, and because at all times one was puzzled to distinguish the "floating population,"—consisting of various honorary or ex-members of former classes, musical professors and friends of the conductors, clergymen interested in music, chorists of the city, editors and critics, &c., &c.—from the constant nucleus of the Class. There was always a clear centre and focus of business in the crowd, to be sure; but actual membership seemed to be a thing of *more or less*, graduated from that centre outwards to the curious and critical on-lookers on the outskirts, buzzing and speculating by the doors and in the lobbies. At no time has the number, both of participants and "lookers on in Venice" come so near to overflowing the Melodeon, as we were led last week to anticipate; and yet it has steadily increased from day to day. Some exercises have been less attractive than others; some are sure to draw many of the bystanders into the ranks of active participants; while others as surely create a reflux tide. A financial statement from the managers, showing how many persons have bought tickets to the course, would alone show the number really enlisted for the war; but that is a matter of their private business, which we do not know that they are under any obligation to make public. The largest number that we have seen at any one time engaged in an exercise, could not have been far from four hundred,—re-

cruited possibly by an extra hundred at the concerts.

This fluctuation of numbers has naturally involved more or less looseness of organization, and lack of unity, promptness and progressive method. It was plain to see that the ten days' period was not economized to the best advantage; teachers and all of course felt it; at the same time it would require a great head, great means and great preparation to secure any such ideal economy. It is really a great work to conduct through one of these conventions; and if at first we were continually impressed by a sense of lack of sufficient organization; if the materials appeared not to have been carefully enough "cut and dried" beforehand; if many times the thing seemed to *hang fire*, all parties being somewhat at a loss what to undertake next, and looking wistfully about for some volunteer singer, or organist, or ready lecturer to step in and play the part of a good Providence; if too many gaps had to be filled up with "talking against time" and divers amiable apologetic twaddle;—yet after all, our wonder was that so much good was in the long run evolved, by one means or another, if only by the mere magnetic contact of meeting so much together, with minds addressed towards a common end. Considering there was no bond or pledge of constancy on the part of the pupils, except free attraction, and that each came and went as inclination prompted, it was wonderful how far a very simple organization went. Each day had its programme, which was pretty regularly followed, wisely leaving room for chance varieties and opportunities of listening to artists and specimens of various kinds of music, which had to be taken as they came.

On the whole, we find ourselves arriving at the same conclusion, that we have at all of the Conventions before: namely, that, although there has been much that was valuable in the way of direct instruction by the Professors, yet the incidental advantages of such occasions are their greatest recommendation. It is like going to College. The great majority of graduates, when asked what they have gained by College life, will tell you that they are conscious of more benefit received from simply living in the academic atmosphere, with young and ardent fellows of like intellectual aspirations with themselves, and amid the inspiring circumstances of the place, than from the direct teaching of the text-book and professor. Stimulus to the musical desire, the musical curiosity, the musical faculty,—*stimulus* from the meeting of many active minds, and the flowing into the vortex thus created of much of the surrounding musical element (singers, players, bands, &c., volunteering specimens of their skill and of the works of composers known too merely by their names):—*this* is the vital principle and spring of influence in musical conventions; this is what, by an instinctive calculation, guarantees the country chorister and singing-teacher that he will not lose his week spent in attendance on these meetings, whatever the teaching, and whoever the conductor.

Let us now try to follow, in memory, the order of a working day in the convention;—a day, however, patched together out of parts of several days, the subjects of our intermittent observation.

2. THE ELEMENTARY LESSONS.

The early morning hours of each day, from

eight till ten o'clock, have been devoted to a course of lessons in Harmony and Thorough Bass, followed by another in the simple Rudiments of Reading, Writing, and Singing Music, (more especially with reference to the art of teaching them to others), by Mr. A. N. JOHNSON. Not having been able to command these hours, we can say nothing from personal observation. But in confirmation of our general remark above it may be said, that year by year the interest of the classes, in these dry exercises, once the origin and substance of the whole thing, has been on the decrease. It is not this mainly that they come for; the rudiments have got pretty generally spread; the novelty of the matter is exhausted; and this feature of the musico-educational session has shrunk into a less space than it formerly occupied, to make room for more practice and more hearing of the live substance of music itself. Yet there are those, who need and who come to learn these things, and the programme would be incomplete without them. The other exercises of the day, however, show that the great majority of the rank and file in these convention classes are already readers of music—of course with limitations.

3. GLEE AND CHORUS PRACTICE.

This has occupied the hours from 10 to 11 A. M. and from 3 to 4 P. M.; the whole class, under the direction of Mr. L. H. SOUTHARD, (one of the most talented, accomplished and sound among our young native musicians,) singing four-part pieces from a new collection just issued by Messrs. Baker and Southard, under the title of "Union Glee Book." We dread every new book added to the stock of native manufacture; since commonly musical genius and even taste have had much less to do with such productions, than a shrewd eye to mere money gain. It was encouraging, therefore, to hear three or four pieces from this book, original compositions, too, which alone were enough to save any book. One piece, by Mr. Southard, to words from Ossian ("Where thou, a Stone, dost moulder down, and lose thee in the moss of years, there shall the traveller, whistling, pass," &c.,) compares well in real beauty, dignity and contrapuntal character of style with any young American effort at composition, which we now recall. It is wrought up in a manner worthy of Dr. Calcott; and when it comes to the triumphant portion of the words: "But Fingal shall be clothed with fame," a clear, manly, and vigorous fugue sets in and proceeds with unflagging energy to the close. This piece speaks well for the original force, as well as true, persevering classical study, of the young author. And it spoke well for the growth of musical perception in the general mass of the convention, that they knew that it was good. A light little Barcarolle of Mr. Southard's also, in a minor key, and somewhat Mendelssohnian spirit, had a pleasing effect. There was also rehearsed a sort of vocal Notturmo (also by the same) with an obligato tenor melody, accompanied in sustained vowel harmonies by the whole chorus, in which there were beautiful and ingenious effects; but these were scarcely to be brought out without long practice. Indeed it was rather an instrumental than a vocal piece. A bright and jovial Glee, by Mr. Baker, also told agreeably upon the audience. These pieces were accompanied by Mr. BUTLER at the organ, and by Mr. LEAVENS and Mr. FITZ, at a grand and a square

piano—not a good combination in any case, but less offensive here than in some other kinds of music of which we have to speak. The practice was thoroughly conducted, stopping frequently to reiterate a passage until the composer-conductor's idea was satisfied; and one could not listen two or three days in succession, without feeling that much had actually been learned. Indeed these conventions, viewed as singing meetings, always seem like a daily growth from chaos into some approach to order.

4. CULTIVATION OF THE VOICE.

This exercise, under the conduct of Mr. B. F. BAKER, occupied the hour from eleven to twelve, and seemed to be always well attended. The art of delivering the voice, of producing pure, musical tone, was one of too great intrinsic interest to all our native singers, to be slighted. Of course, in these few brief opportunities, the teacher could do little more than point out a few of the most essential principles and points of a true method, prescribing the model, characterizing in contrast (which in the nature of the case involved caricaturing) the prevailing false habits, and leading the whole choir to practice each point over and over together, criticizing and correcting until it sounded right. Like all true teachers of the voice, he reduced the great mysteries of the art to a few, (we might almost say) to one very little formula—just a couple of 4-4 measures, which stood almost always written on the black-board, filled by one long note, with the sign of the swell and *dimuendo* over it. In this one art of properly commencing, swelling, diminishing and ending one tone, lies the first principle and secret of all graceful delivery of the voice; it gives the singer from the first a model, an ideal, as it were in the germ, of that ever undulating line of beauty which should mark equally the phrase, the passage, the whole composition. It was delightful to contrast the effect (in full unison chorus) of this one lesson thoroughly practised, with the first coarse and confused attempts. Simply raising the pitch of the second half of the formula one note introduced another important lesson, that of the *portamento*, or art of carrying the voice from one note to another. How many bad singers, who want neither execution nor feeling, would quite revolutionize their entire style, (or more properly, *get* style, where they had none), by radically attending to these two seemingly little, but really very great points!—The difference of the *legato* and *staccato* manners, the nature of vowel and consonant sounds, &c., &c., were among the points explained and illustrated. But we were only an occasional witness, and cannot detail the whole course.

5. ORGAN-PLAYING.

A pleasant episode here followed, at least on several days. We were glad to see partly realized a wish which we have long had with regard to these conventions; namely, that an hour, more or less, should be consecrated each day to listening to specimens of organ-playing, in the true forms of organ music. This sublime instrument is notoriously trifled with and desecrated in most of the churches in our land. In the country, especially, it is seldom known what organ-playing is. The true, the lofty contrapuntal style, the real organ style, which, if not always fugue, has always the fugue principle, or fugue spirit in it, is often so much Greek to the uninitiated at first hearing. But a few hearings prepare the mind

to feel, if not to understand its meaning; and the style is sure to grow upon one with a wondrous power. Here then is the opportunity, while singers are assembled from all parts of the country for so many days, to call in all the principal organists (resident or visitors) to give in turn some specimens of their best skill in the best music.

How far this was done on the present occasion we must tell next week, for our space is exhausted. The Concerts and some other episodes and exercises, also, still await their turn of mention.

Musical Intelligence.

Local.

MME. WIEDMANN, *prima donna* from the operas at New Orleans and Paris, is in Boston, with Sig. GENIBRELL, *primo basso*, and Sig. C. BASSINI, the violinist, whose performance in New York won high approval. They give a concert next week. The audience at the Convention Thursday evening seemed delighted with a touch of their quality. The lady is plainly of the Pasta and Parodi school,—vastly superior to Parodi—of the impassioned, intense order, needing the stage with room for action, but with a glorious *mezzo soprano* or *contralto* voice. There was genuine power in all she did, and we doubt if we have yet had so good a specimen of this French-Italian School. No room now for more.

OPERA HOUSE. The current report, which had gone the round of the newspapers uncontradicted, and which we copied last week, to the effect that the estate back of the Melodeon had been purchased for this object, turns out to be incorrect. The Gas company hold it at too high a price.

THE OPENING. We understand that all the principal musical societies in Boston have volunteered to take part in a grand opening concert or festival of the new Music Hall. These are, the Handel and Haydn Society, the Musical Education Society, the Musical Fund Society, the German "Maenner-Chor," under Mr. Kreissmann, and (as having established a pretty kindred relationship with Boston, by repeated and long visits) the Germania Musical Society. The best available solo talent, at that time in the country, will also probably be engaged. We hope that it will be made more than one concert; that it will be made a festival, with a morning, afternoon and evening performance; one being oratorio, another instrumental, in the great form of symphony, &c.; and the third miscellaneous. Such an announcement would draw many to the city and redound to the treasury of the Music Hall,—perhaps go far towards furnishing the means for a first-class organ, which seems all-essential to the completeness of its character, as the Music Hall of Boston.

TREMONT TEMPLE is rebuilding rapidly. It is said (we know not with what authority) that it also will be finished in November. The great hall, whose floor is to cover the entire third story of the building, will, it is said, equal in area the Boston Music Hall. A superb organ, on a larger scale than any in this country, is already commenced for it, at the factory of the Messrs. Hook, in this city.

MUSICAL FUND SOCIETY. At a meeting held on Friday, of last week, Mr. AUGUST FRIES was chosen conductor, and Mr. RIBAS substitute, in place of Mr. GEORGE J. WEBB, whose other cares and duties compel him to resign this. He still continues, we understand, to serve as President. The rehearsals will commence next month, and the new music selected in Europe by Mr. Fries, to supply the place of that lost in the Tremont Temple, is already on its way.

MR. HELMSMÜLLER's connection with the "Germania Society" has ceased. A gentleman from Baltimore succeeds him as agent.

England.

THE FESTIVALS. The London season, of Operas, Chamber Concerts, Philharmonics, &c., is over; only one novelty remained—Jullien's new opera at the Royal Italian—"and then" (says the *Musical World*) "away, not to the moors, but to the musical festivals." These will about consume the month of September; three of

them, giants, treading one close upon the heels of another. First and greatest comes the

I. BIRMINGHAM FESTIVAL, on the 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th of September. The principal singers engaged are:

"Madame Viardot Garcia, Madame Castellani, Miss Dolby, Mlle. Anna Zerr, Mlle. Bertrandi, Miss M. Williams, and Madame Clara Novello; Signor Tamberlik, Mr. Lockey, Mr. T. Williams, and Mr. Sims Reeves; Herr Fornes, Mr. Weiss, Signor Polonini, and Signor Belletti. The principal solo performers are:—Violin, M. Sainton; violoncello, Signor Piatti; contrabasso, Signor Bottesini."

The programmes are of the solid, mountainous order, which it would frighten anybody but John Bull to think of trying to digest. Five heavy oratorios in four days! In the first two days Mendelssohn occupies almost the whole field, especially two of his posthumous works, here given for the first time. The following is an outline.

Tuesday morning—*Eljiah*.

Tuesday evening—*Walpurgis Night*, and miscellaneous concert.

Wednesday morning—Mendelssohn's *Christus*, a motet of Dr. Wesley, and the *Creation*.

Wednesday evening—Miscellaneous concert, including the finale to *Loreley*, by Mendelssohn.

Thursday morning—*The Messiah*.

Thursday evening—Beethoven's Choral Symphony, and a miscellaneous concert.

Friday morning—*Samsou*, which has never been performed at any Birmingham Musical Festival in a complete form.

Mr. Costa will be conductor. The Chorus will consist of 80 sopranos, 80 altos, 80 tenors and 84 basses; the orchestra, of 28 first violins (Sainton and Blagrove being principals), 26 second violins, 18 tenors, 19 violoncellos (including Piatti, solo,) 17 double-basses (including Bottesini, solo,) 4 flutes, 4 oboes, 4 clarinets, 4 bassoons, 4 trumpets, 4 horns, 3 trombones, 1 ophicleide, 2 serpent drums, triangle &c.

2. HEREFORD FESTIVAL. The "Festival of the three Choirs" of Worcester, Hereford and Gloucester, will commence on Monday, September 13th, and close on Friday, the 17th. We copy from the *Times* of August 3d:

"There will be as usual four performances of sacred music at the Cathedral, and three evening concerts at the Shire-hall. On Tuesday morning (the 14th) there will be, as customary, full cathedral service and a sermon. The service will open with the 100th Psalm, old version (Luther), the preces, responses, and chant will all be Tallis's, and the *Te Deum*, as usual, that composed by Handel for the Dettingen victory. The anthem selected is one by the organist of Hereford Cathedral and the conductor of the festival, Mr. G. Townsend Smith, "Behold God is mighty;" and before the sermon an anthem by Mendelssohn, from Psalm 95, 'O come let us worship,' will be given. Dr. Croft's 'Cry aloud and shout' will follow the sermon. On Wednesday morning Haydn's *Creation*, will be given entire; the principal solo parts by the principal singers, Clara Novello, Miss Williams, Mrs. Endersohn, Herr Fornes, Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. Lockey, and Mr. Phillips. Mr. Sims Reeves will also sing the recitative and air, 'Sound an alarm,' from *Judas Maccabeus*; and the Kyrie Eleison, the Gloria, Sanctus, and Benedictus, from Beethoven's service in C will close the second morning's performance of sacred music. On Thursday morning there will be a double attraction in two oratorios not very frequently performed at these festivals, viz., Mendelssohn's *St Paul* and Dr. Spohr's *Last Judgment*. Friday, the last morning, will be devoted as usual to the *Messiah*. The evening concerts at the Shire-hall present no great novelty, if we except the introduction of glees and madrigals, which of late, especially since the establishment of the 'English Glee and Madrigal Union,' have become more popular and fashionable. All three of the concerts are 'Miscellaneous,' comprising *excerpts* from the *repertoires* of the old opera and instrumental composers, Spohr, Mozart, Bellini, Weber, Donizetti, Beethoven, &c., with some bits from more modern writers; glees by Webb, Sir H. Bishop, the Earl of Mornington, Dr. Arne and Stevens; and madrigals by Welbys and Macfarren. The principal singers have also songs allotted to them. In the secular instrumental department we have the overtures to Mozart's *Zauberflöte*, Weber's *Oberon*, a concert overture in A minor (MS.), by A. Mellor, and Rossini's *Guillaume Tell*. Beethoven's Symphony in D will be given on the Wednesday evening, and a symphony in A major by Mendelssohn will open Thursday evening's performances. As usual at Hereford there will be a ball after the concerts on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. The band is from the usual London sources, under the leadership of Mr. H. Blagrove, and the chorus is selected from the Philharmonic Concerts, and the cathedral choirs and choral societies of Hereford, Gloucester and Worcester."

3. NORWICH FESTIVAL. Sept. 21st, 22d, 23d and 24th. This was postponed last year on account of the absence in America of M. Jules Benedict, who has usually con-

ducted it. This year again he directs all the arrangements. He has engaged as principal singers: Madame Viardot, Madame Fiorentini, Misses Louisa Pyne, Dolby, and Alleyne; Messrs. Sims Reeves, Lockey, and Weiss, Signor Gardoni, Signor Belletti, and Herr Fornes.

The programme promises a great amount of novelty. There will be two new English oratorios; one by Dr. Bexfield, and one by Mr. Pierson, who formerly held the chair as Professor of Music at the University of Edinburgh.

The evening concerts will comprise selections from Spohr's *Faust*, Macfarren's *Charles the Second*, Meyerbeer's *Prophète*, Benedict's *Minnesinger*, the finale of Mendelssohn's unfinished opera, *Loreley*, and the *Midsummer Night's Dream* of the same composer, with Mrs. Fanny Kemble to read the text.

The orchestra and chorus will be on the same magnificent scale as is usual at the Norwich Festival. More than one hundred of the executants have been selected from London. The soloists will be Sainton, Blagrove, and Bottesini.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA. Among the last performances were the *Puritani* and *Anna Bolena*, with Grisi and Mario in each. In the Percy of the latter piece, Mario is said (by the *Musical World*) to have surpassed Rubini, and that "in spite of a certain prodigality in the use of the falsetto" in the cavatina: *Vivi tu*. Marini's Henry VIII. was "studied and careful, but somewhat wanting in the necessary weight and dignity."

Julien's first lyric work: *Pietro il Grande*, was announced for August 7th. Great was the curiosity to hear; the singers delighted with their parts, and success predicted by the rehearsal-favored *cognoscenti*. We find the following account of the plot:

"The piece is divided into three acts. In act one, Peter and his suite are working in the dockyard of Zaandam, in Holland. They are all disguised. Among the women who supply the workmen with provisions is Catherine, who falls in love with Peter. Catherine has a sweetheart, whom she makes jealous by her seeming preference to Peter. This gives rise to a 'row,' which leads to an attempt on the part of the sweetheart to kill Peter when all have retired, but Catherine steps in and saves his life. Subsequently, Peter's incognito is disclosed, when he sets sail for Russia, leaving poor Catherine in despair.

"In the second act—several years subsequent to the first, according to history—the scene takes place before the battle of Pultava, or Pultowa. The Russian and Swedish armies are encamped within sight of each other. Peter, secure in his position, gives a grand feast in his tent. In the midst of their revelling, Catherine breaks into their tent, and informs them that the Swedish army is being reinforced by an immense body of Turkish troops, and that the two armies together are marching upon the Russian camp. At Catherine's instigation, Peter gives her jewels of price, with which she hastens to the Grand Vizier, and induces him, by these presents and her own melting words, to draw off his force. The Swedes alone attack the Russians, and are defeated with great loss. Thus Catherine saves Peter and his entire army from destruction.

"In act the third, we are in the Kremlin, at Moscow. It is night, and a band of conspirators steal into the silent and deserted street, and there swear to assassinate Peter that night. Heading the conspirators is Rossomak, Hetman of the Cossacks—the Iago of the piece—who hates Peter for several reasons, and is banished by him to Siberia. The conspirators have escaped from the mines of Siberia, and have come to Moscow to take revenge on Peter for his fancied neglect and severities. Time and circumstances favor their attempt. It is the night when, according to royal Russian usage, the Tzar has to select his empress from the daughters of the Boyars or noblemen assembled on the occasion. (In this incident, Mr. Desmond Ryan is borne out by history. After such fashion did Alexis, father of Peter, choose his Tzarina). The Royal Palace is thrown open, and all visitors admitted. So far, so good for the assassins. While they take the oath of murder in the street, they are overheard. Catherine, in the hope of again seeing Peter, has journeyed to Moscow, and has just entered within the Kremlin, and in sight of the Palace, when she falls exhausted on the steps of a church door, and hearing footsteps, conceals herself behind a pillar. In this position she learns the designs of the conspirators; and when they depart, she hastens to the palace, gains admission to Peter, and apprises him of his danger. Precautions are carefully taken, by which the assassins are drawn into their own net and entrapped. Peter, who loves 'even-handed justice,' deals with Rossomak himself, and kills him with the weapon directed against his own life. Thus Peter, for the third time, is saved by Catherine, and acknowledging the interposition of Providence in her person, he selects her for his imperial partner.

"The author of the book has violated history to the utmost," &c.

"The following will be the cast of the principals:—

Peter, Tamberlik; Menzikoff, Stigelli; Galitzin, Soldi; Lefort, Tagliafico; Sherematoff, Polonini; Bauer, Luigi Mei; Hetman Rossomak, Fornes; Zeinberg, Rommi; and Catherine, Anna Zerr.

"Upon the scenery, decorations, and appointments, the management has been more lavish than ever. The battle scene, in the second act, we understand, will be one of the most gorgeous and magnificent spectacles ever presented on any stage; while the imperial throne-room, in the last act, with the assemblage of courtiers, nobles, ladies, pages, officers of all hues and climes, &c., &c., will be no less striking and splendid.

"The ballet constitutes an important item in Julien's opera. In the first act a grand *fête* takes place in the dockyard of Zaandam, in which there are some exceedingly charming and characteristic dances; and in the last scene, in the palace, there is introduced the Mazurka, Polonaise, and dances with choruses."

HER MAJESTY'S. Sontag, it appears, declines singing twelve nights, as announced, before visiting America. Lumley brings a suit against her in Paris; but the Countess pleads that certain monies had not been prepaid at the time Lumley promised.

Among the recent performances, the appearance of Mme. Charton in the *Sonnambula* has excited most attention. The *Athenæum* joins in the general praise of this lady's performances in French comic opera at the St. James's Theatre:

"There, the agreeable and caressing tones of her voice, the expressiveness and pretty grace of her personations, made want of power unfelt and want of finish forgotten. But the requirements of Bellini are not more different from those of Auber and Thomas than are the attributes respectively demanded by Mr. Lumley's and by Mr. Mitchell's theatres; and we are sorry that if the clever and charming lady must exchange the small French for the great Italian stage, she should have ventured her first experiment by attempting *La Sonnambula* in a theatre where Pasta, Persiani, Lind and Sontag have been the *Aminas* before her, and without apparently having prepared herself for change of occupation by practice.—Her voice has not attained the length and largeness of delivery demanded by Italian cantabile: her execution is not sufficiently clear or accentuated to deliver the *bravura* passages belonging to the two great airs which the part contains. Want of stamens and a smallness were to be felt throughout Mme. Charton's treatment of the music, somewhat at variance with her true and unaffected conception of the simplicity, tenderness and distress of the character. Her Italian, too, is curiously nipped and pinched, and every vowel is mystified. In short, Madame Charton has a long course of up-hill vocal labor to go through, which she may not prove physically qualified to sustain, before she can maintain a prominent place on the Italian stage. Yet, however obviously this be needed, a personal charm and (to repeat our first epithet) pleasantness kept the new *Amina* in the good graces of her audience."

MORE POSTHUMOUS WORKS OF MENDELSSOHN.—Chorley, in the *Athenæum*, gives a "glimpse into the form and nature" of the finished portions of Mendelssohn's third oratorio: "Christus;" viz. *Recitatives, Trio and Choruses*. Op. 97, (of the posthumous works, No. 26.) These have been published in London, with an English version by W. Bartholomew, and are to be brought out (as we have noted above) at the Birmingham Festival. The critic thinks it due to the composer's memory to believe that, in the finished state of the "Christus," he would have altered several of these movements, as he did in "Elijah" even after its public performance in Birmingham. He would give "the benefit of a doubt" to a collection of scattered pieces, some of which, he says, too closely reproduce effects already indicated in "Elijah" and "St. Paul."

"On the other hand, they evince that, as he proceeded, Mendelssohn was increasingly anxious for pure and healthy simplicity of structure. The *trio* for the three male voices, 'Say, where is he born?' is capital as a piece of tuneable, manly, and natural part-writing. Very sweet and serene, too, with great dignity of line, (as the painters might say,) is the opening of the chorus 'There shall be a star from Jacob come forth.' Another point to be noticed of great power and beauty is, the unusual close of the chorus 'He stirreth up the Jews.' Bold, massive, and full of ruthless power is the fragment 'We have a sacred law.' As a whole, the short choruses, interspersed with recitative, in what may be called the trial scene before Pilate, might, it is possible, have been restudied by Mendelssohn as too fragmentary in effect,—they not being mere ejaculations and arid responses binding together the dialogue, and working it up to some explosion, (an effect well understood by him, as the contest between *Elijah* and the Priests of *Baal* testifies,) so much as short, separate movements, each one of which tantalizes the ear by a new musical subject, susceptible of development. Perhaps Mendelssohn's extreme veneration for Sebastian Bach may have here taken the form of an unconscious adoption of the manner displayed in the *Passions' Musik*."

"About one of these choruses there will be no dispute: we allude to the movement 'Daughters of Israel,' in which the tone of lament without lacrymose languor is sustained with a simple pathos and a refined art that can hardly be sufficiently studied—that cannot be too much admired. We should imagine that this must have been the produce of one of those happiest moments of inspiration when the thought, Minerva-like, springs forth 'with all its armor on,' and the idea and its expression are felt and are uttered as one. The resumption of the theme by the male singers—the wailing motion of the accompaniment, (pp. 36-7) so independent of the voices, yet so agreed with them—may be cited as touches of the master in a movement throughout masterly. When we compare these few pages—so simple of execution, so immediate in their effect, yet to the structure of which so much of the highest skill has been brought in utterance of the highest poetry—to some of the furious and vehement and scarcely accessible monstrosities of what is called the new school, it seems as if we were dealing with things that had no common purpose—no common meaning—no common language."

2. The other publication is: *Six Songs, with Piano-forte accompaniment*. op. 99. (Posthumous, No. 28,) with English version by Bartholomew. These are pronounced fully worthy of their composer; but the critic justly says: "They must be sung with the German—not the English—words. Indeed, as a body, Mendelssohn's songs are too largely shut up from English singers by want of taste in the translated text."

Germany.

VIENNA. The anniversary of Gluck's birth was celebrated here on the 4th inst. Some few years since, his admirers restored the monument erected to his memory in the cemetery of Mäzleindorf. A small marble tablet, let into the masonry of the original monument, bears the following inscription:—

"Here lies a good and loyal German—a zealous Christian, and a faithful husband—the Chevalier CHRISTOPHER GLUCK, a great master of the sublime Art of Music. He died on the 15th of November, 1787."

Verdi is to compose an opera for the next season of the Theatre Italien.—Leopold de Meyer has got back here; he will pass some time hydropathically at Gräfenberg, and return to pass the next winter at Paris.—In the autumn, *Udine*, a new opera by M. Swoff, aid-de-camp of the Emperor of Russia, director of the imperial chapel and author of the National Hymn, will be produced at the court theatre.—A mass, by the chapel-master Assmayer, was performed on the 18th July, the anniversary of the foundation of the Academy of Music.

HAMBURG. Mme. Otto Goldschmidt and husband have just left for the baths of Scheveningen, in Holland.—Pischek has made his appearance in *Une nuit à Grenade*.

BRUNSWICK. The Musical Festival took place on the 1st and 4th of July. Among other things, Mendelssohn's "Elijah" and Beethoven's choral symphony were performed. The rumor, copied into the English papers, that Mme. Goldschmidt was to sing, proves to have been incorrect.

Italy.

FLORENCE. Rossini presided recently over a performance of his admirable choruses: "Faith, Hope and Charity," in a concert of the Philharmonic Society. (These pieces are written in three parts for female voices.) Several illustrious amateurs took part, as the princess Poniatowski and the countess Orsini.

It is said that Rossini was never in better health than he is at present. The following circumstance connected with the great maestro is reported as having recently occurred in Florence. For the last two years, the Sultan, who is exceedingly fond of music, has on several occasions offered Rossini fabulous sums of money, besides all sorts of Turkish decorations and orders of merit, on condition that he would compose him some lyrical work or other. As Rossini never returned any answer, his Highness determined to send one of the *attachés* of the Embassy with strict orders not to leave him without having obtained something for the theatre at Constantinople. The *attaché* accordingly visited Rossini, who received him with his accustomed politeness, and begged him to wait a few seconds. The composer then went up stairs to his study. About an hour afterwards he came down again with a manuscript, hardly dry, in his hand. "Will you be kind enough to give that to the Sultan?" said he to the *attaché*. "What is the price?" asked the latter. "Nothing—I am only too happy that I am able to do anything that can please his Highness." Knowing the Sultan's taste for military music, Rossini had composed a new march.—*London Musical World*.

MILAN. The young maestro, Emanuele Muzzio, is

writing two operas, one entitled *Claudia* for next Spring, and the other for the autumn. In the autumn, too, will be represented at the theatre Canobiana the *Giovanna la Pazza* of the same composer, who is praised by the Musical Gazette of Milan as a pupil of Verdi.—*La Nina Pazza*, by Coppola, has been revived with great satisfaction.—The French tenor, Bordas, is exciting much interest here.

NAPLES. Cammarano, the opera poet, died on the 16th of July. He had only three days before sent Verdi his last libretto.

TRIESTE. *Ernani* has been filling the house night after night. The tenor, Pellegrini, and the *prima donna* Ruggero Antoniali are spoken of as of the first order of interpreters of Verdi's music.

FABRIANO. The *prima donna* Scotta, the baritone Fiori, and the tenor Ferrari Stella, keep up an enthusiasm in *I Lombardi* and *Louisa Miller*.—Still always Verdi!

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